

SCOTT COUNTY KICKER

Vol. XIV

BENTON, MO., MARCH 6, 1915.

No. 6.

IN THE SOUTHEAST.

What the People are Doing in Other Counties that are Near.

Capitalist law is a queer jumble of contradictions. One of their most sacred laws is what they call the "unwritten law," which justifies one man in murdering another for monkeying with his wife. According to the capitalist code, woman is not a citizen and inferior to man. To possess a woman is like possessing a horse or cow—a kind of private property. Just as the brutal railroad detectives or watchmen are sometimes justified in shooting men, women or children who may be caught picking up waste coal in the railroad yards of large cities, so a man is justified in murdering his neighbor who is caught with an unfaithful wife. Yet the man who does the shooting may be guilty of a similar offense against some other home.

But I guess there must be exceptions to this law as to others. To make it apply it is probably necessary that the parties interested belong to the same class. At Caruthersville, last week, Wm. Downing shot and killed Harry Cunningham in this way. The name Cunningham is very prominent in the affairs of Peoria county. And while the papers down there give lengthy accounts of the tragedy, yet one of them mentions the "unwritten law." According to the Peisecot Argus it happened this way:

"Tuesday evening Wm. Downing shot and instantly killed Harry Cunningham at the Downing home. After firing the fatal shot, he left the body of his victim reclining against a hot stove and started out on the street after his wife, but was taken in charge by Marshal Scott before he could find her. Cunningham had been boarding at the Downing home for some time and Downing's wife, some hours previously on Tuesday, having no pistol then he could do nothing. About 6:30 that evening, having armed himself, he found Cunningham in the Conrad saloon and marched him out at the point of the pistol telling him he had to go down to the house where Downing's wife was. Cunningham started, but managed to tell a friend to get an officer. They walked along Ward avenue in plain sight of numerous persons who saw the revolver, but thinking that Downing was an officer with a prisoner, they did not interfere. Marshal Scott was told and started at once for the house, but arrived too late to prevent the killing."

While it seems that systematic efforts are being made to suppress the news of the discontented farmers south of us, yet the night-ride trouble is evidently spreading. The newspapers on the ground give very little or no information and the news is gleaned chiefly from the St. Louis papers. Until state troops were called for I never heard of it. The local papers under the thumbs of the landlords, tell the farmers to be good and obey the law—which, in the last analysis, is the machine gun. It is almost a pity that the governor did not see fit to send his soldiers down into New Madrid county. Very few of these farmers have any sympathy for the workers in the coal mines and other industries who rebel against inhuman conditions, but are "persuaded" with machine guns to accept them. However, these farmers can gain nothing by violent means. It will only get them into trouble. Yet a close view of the state troops might have convinced them what they are for. Night-riding is reported on the Kentucky and Tennessee side of the river and on the Missouri side in New Madrid county. The result will probably be a big batch of indictments when the landlords set their grand juries in motion.

Bloomfield Vindicator.—Ester, the little seven-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Ward, was run over and killed instantly by a freight train at Essex Tuesday afternoon. Two other little girls were snatched from the track by their father barely in time to save their lives. The three little girls were standing on the siding waiting for the passenger to go by. The roar of the engine kept them from hearing a local freight switching on the siding, and before they realized their danger the little girl was under the wheels of the train. Her body was badly mangled and death came instantly.

Jackson Items.—To stockmen there seems to be something mysterious about the livestock market. For the past years the government has been drawing attention to the ever decreasing number of cattle in the country, despite the increasing population. Now, notwithstanding the highest feed prices, hogs and cattle are cheaper than in years. Nobody need be surprised if in a month or two meat prices—for the finished product—will soar skyward.

These dull times you should be reading a live paper—a Kicker.

A dispatch from Charleston tells of trouble between the blacks and whites in Mississippi county at a place called Dorena. The negroes are employed on levee work and have taken possession of the white church at Dorena and, after piling the benches and other furnishings in one end of the building, have converted the church into quarters for cooking, eating and sleeping, thus depriving the whites of their place of worship. The citizens posted notices around the church and levee camps, warning the negroes to vacate the church building and to leave the county, and also condemned the foreman of the levee construction for bringing such negroes into the county. L. T. Colahan, the foreman, offered \$100 reward for the names of the parties who put up the circulars. Other notices followed demanding the negroes leave the county under the penalty of death. The posters have a crude drawing of a shotgun. Although the feeling against the negroes is very strong, Sheriff King anticipates no trouble in handling the situation.

Dexter Statesman.—Bill York, of the Hayti Herald, is going after Con. Roach with a sharp stick and moreover, Bill is right. We have been asked to write our representative and senator to vote for bills requiring more "legal" publications, but as these legal publications go to a few pets of the state or other officials, we just haven't the heart to howl for it, especially as we get none of the "rake off." Yes, we are easy, but not so darned easy as to be a cat's paw to rake nuts out of the fire for some durned, sneaked, acorn-bellied monkey. The average country paper doesn't get enough of the "swag" to make it enthusiastic for graft and that's what about three-fourths of the legal printings—pure graft.

Campbell Citizen.—Cleve Behr brought to the Citizen office last week some specimens of pottery taken from a sand pit on the Erieo near a Canaan school house. The find consisted of jars, pitchers, bowls, and pieces of bone found six and seven feet below the surface. It is impossible to rescue a whole piece of the pottery as it breaks very readily and does not seem to have been baked very hard. Each bowl or pitcher seems to have been filled with charred acorns. It may be the acorns were parched and placed in the vessels for food. Some of the pottery plainly shows a shaped and decorated on the outside. Mr. Behr says he is sure these relics of the first inhabitants of America have never before been disturbed.

Jackson Items.—The cattle barn of R. B. Statler, living near Millerville, caught fire from some unknown cause last Thursday evening and was completely destroyed. When discovered, the flames had spread so far that a large herd of cattle could barely be driven to safety. The feeding was done by daylight and it is not known how the fire could have started. During the day hay was baled at the barn and hauled to the cattle barn for storage, being intended for sale, and only for the fact that the machine broke down the loss would have been greater. The directors of the Farmers Mutual, which had the property insured, yesterday appraised the loss and awarded Mr. Statler \$628.50 insurance.

Farmington Times.—Albert Roberts, shift boss at No. 4 Des Moines, and Tona Sinko and Mike Fedoc, two Hungarians, were instantly killed Sunday morning, and two other Hungarians were dangerously injured by an explosion which occurred while the drill holes were being charged with dynamite. Mr. Roberts had been connected with the company for years and was considered a very capable miner and foreman. Just how the sad accident occurred will perhaps never be known. The two miners who were injured were at work about sixty feet away on a bluff.

East Prairie Eagle.—Wm. Surrell has a watch with a remarkable record. It is a fifteen jewel Waltham, railroad movement, and he bought it in New Madrid in 1867, forty-eight years ago. The watch has been in constant use and during all this time, nearly a half century, has never been repaired, no money spent upon it and all, and it has never been clean or oiled. The watch keeps perfect time. This is a rather remarkable record, especially as to cleaning and oiling.

Amos Sifford, a prominent farmer and stock grower of Stoddard county, whose home is located two miles west of Bloomfield committed suicide by hanging himself early Saturday morning. His body was found hanging to a rafter in one of the sheds of his barn, and it is thought that he committed the act while his wife was milking in an adjoining shed.

Last week the Cape Republican published a very creditable "boom" edition in commemoration of the tenth year of its existence, in which a description of Cape Girardeau county and its people appears. But it only tells part of the story. From it one would judge that everybody in Cape county lived in fine houses, wore good clothes and were overfed. Bank and trust company buildings, mills, stores, churches, breweries, distilleries and so on are beautifully pictured, together with the residences and owners who profit from these institutions. But the scenes that surround the working class and their homes are not in it. To balance the thing they should have gone down into South Cape and wrote up "Mill Town," where whole families live in the dilapidated ruins of a box car—or worse. But the business men would hardly pay for such advertising as that. Only the bright side must be held out for inspection.

WHERE WILL IT END? The present trouble in various communities between the negroes and the whites is not race hatred nor anything of that sort. As a rule, when there is trouble between the blacks and the whites we are told that it is a "race war."

Nothing of the sort in the present development. It is a matter of the "survival of the fittest"—a bread and butter proposition. While I noticed last week the dispatches from west Tennessee and southern Missouri telling of the night riders, my attention was especially attracted to a "riot" in which a former marshal of Oran was a participant. The Fredericktown News says: "Oscar Hull of Marquand had an information filed against him this week by the prosecuting attorney, on the charge of assault on J. H. Bramhall, a tie man. The trouble grew out of Bramhall using a crew of negroes to load ties when the Marquand men wanted the job."

Now, let me give the white workers who are trying to run out the black workers, a tip. And what follows I want you to let sink in.

The negroes have never had any protection in this country under the law—especially south of here. White men could shoot them down or lynch them and the law was inactive. But the recent development in economic conditions has changed this. The negro is almost as valuable to the master class today as he was under slavery, and will receive the same protection. He can live in almost any kind of a hut, on coarse food, and don't care much about clothes. He can live cheaper than a white slave. Therefore he now has the protection of "the law" that has always operated against him. And that is why the militia was called upon to protect the negro tenant farmers of West Tennessee and of Southern Missouri, and why Oscar Hull was arrested in Madison county.

The lesson to be learned from this is that the master class cares nothing about race, color or nationality. What it wants is the labor that will yield the greatest profit. So far as the workers are concerned, they are all slaves—no matter of what race, color or nationality. The masters control their jobs and, thereby, their living.

Until the workers understand this and combine against their oppressors in self defense, they will, in their ignorance, continue to night-ride and slaughter each other.

Yes, sir; the law-makers, or somebody, are always looking after the well-being of the dear old farmer. Two years ago Wilson, Bryan & Co. were going to fix him up just right. They were going to support him with money, throw at the birds when they got their currency reform measures through and the regional banks going. When that blew up they were going to fix the farmer—especially the cotton farmer—by supplying him with oodles of cash through certain favored banks. Millions of columns of dope were fed to the farmers about what this "emergency currency" scheme would do for Mr. Hayseed. The nation's got the money alright, but the patriotic bankers refused to loan it at a less rate than their other money—and that wonderful Democratic measure blew up also. But the farmer must be entertained, and now we hear of the Land Bank scheme—whatever it may mean. From the little I have read about it, I find it to be a scheme to get the farmers behind a movement to get the legislature to exempt money from taxation.

According to press dispatch two battalions of English suffragettes have been landed at Havre, France. They will drive motor cars, relieving mail drivers, who will be sent to the battle front.

THE MINISTER SCORED. The young lawyer didn't like the minister, and so he thought to corner him. "Now, Doctor," he asked, "suppose the parson and the devil should have a lawsuit, which party do you think would win?" "The devil unquestionably," replied the minister. "Ah," chuckled the young lawyer. "And will you tell us why?" "Because he would have all the lawyers on his side."

ANOTHER COURT DECISION. The supreme court of Wisconsin has just handed out a decision that seems to cut a wider swath than was intended. Wisconsin is a state that has been fearfully plundered by timber thieves known as the lumber trust. Fifteen years ago the people adopted an amendment to the constitution providing for a forestry commission to preserve its forests and to plant trees on public land where the timber had been stolen.

For years the lumber interests have been at work trying to upset this action on the part of the people and, two weeks ago, succeeded by having the supreme court to declare the amendment to the constitution void. It is often difficult to explain a court decision, for they seldom say what they mean. However, in this case it seems that, as the regular, it is required that the legislature ordering an amendment submitted to the people shall record such amendment on its journal. Also, if the amendment carries and before it can become effective, it must again be spread on the journal.

In this case it appears that when the matter was ordered submitted the record was properly made, but after it had carried, only the title of the act submitted was entered of record. The court holds that the whole thing should have been twice recorded in full—and because someone who was both paid and sworn to do his duty failed, will of the people of a whole state be set aside.

The point is only technical, and the joke of it all is that an investigation reveals that all other amendments adopted in the past fifteen years have the same defect. Among these is an amendment authorizing an increase of supreme judges from seven to nine. Another authorizing an increase in pay for all the supreme judges. And the Milwaukee Leader, with a suppressed smile, gets off this: "The revelation that the supreme court is voiding two amendments to the constitution on a very strained technical point has brought in jeopordy the title to office of two of its members and the increase of salary of all its members, will cause no great amount of public sorrow."

"If the court has succeeded in inadvertently legislating two of its members out of office, it may have a salutary effect upon the judicial disposition to throw monkey wrenches into the machinery of government from pure cussedness."

"We are told that the constitutional amendments which provide for two additional justices of the supreme court and for an increase of judicial salaries were adopted precisely as the citizenship and forestry amendments, which the court has held void, were adopted. Without any hesitation, the court wantonly destroyed the work of the legislature and the people in seeking to establish a forestry service in Wisconsin. When the justices, headed by that fine old Reactionary, Justice Marshall, whose conception of law and work is that trees were made to cut down that sawmill men may get rich, decided that the constitutional amendment on which the forestry act was based had been improperly adopted by the legislature, in that the resolution providing for it had not been copied in full in the legislative journal, they little imagined that their decision would fly back and strike them in the face."

"The title to office of the justices here and were elected under the void amendment, of course, will be brought before the court to adjudicate, as well as the right of its members to the money that they have illegally drawn from the state treasury. It will be embarrassing to the justices involved to retire to private life and wait until a new amendment shall be legally initiated and passed, as it will be for their associates to return to the bench, if they have been wrongfully drawn out, but it will not be as embarrassing to the people of Wisconsin as it will be to reconstruct the ruined forestry work."

"The situation offers to Justice Barnes, the humorist of the court, a splendid opportunity to impress upon his colleagues the folly of blowing into the muzzle of a gun to see if it is loaded. The fired gun who started the kitchen fire with kerosene, and the youth who rocked the boat beat the supreme court of Wisconsin into it. But the court is a close second to the man who sawed off the limb on which he was perched."

It was the Republicans who invented reciprocity, but Missouri Democrats are stealing that in about the same way as they are swiping everything else that is not red hot or spiked down. In plain, common talk, reciprocity means a friendly exchange. Last fall Secretary of State Root handed each of his subsidized organs a \$600 chunk of public pie in the form of constitutional amendments publications. These organs are not ungrateful and are now booming Roach for governor in 1916. Also, Roach will have another batch of this pie for distribution next year among the faithful. Hence we may expect cart-loads of slobber—all because of these huge chunks of public pie that serve no other purpose than to "sugar" a servile press.

If you want the news that other papers suppress, get this one.

WHY IS IT SO? Why should so many people be without food in the midst of plenty? This condition exists only among good, civilized, Christian people. You can find no trace of it among barbarians or savages. Among the wild tribes no child goes hungry as long as there is food within the tribe. Only educated and truly pious people can rest contented at filling their own bellies without the least concern about their brothers.

At harvest time last year the farmers who were forced to sell because of debt, got less than the cost of production from their wheat. Today flour is eight dollars per barrel.

This is not because of any scarcity of wheat, for the crop of last year was the largest ever. Nor has the wheat been exported in greater quantities than heretofore. In fact, there is more wheat in this country today than a year ago.

But it has passed into the hands of those who profit on the misery of others. The wheat is being held for export, and if the administration at Washington can persuade the warring nations to take up their mines out of the sea so that we can get in with our wheat and other supplies, big profits await us—that is, a few of us. And the administration at Washington is run in the interests of that few.

The seaport cities are jammed with food supplies awaiting a chance to be shipped into any war zone that offers big profits. Market letters of last month reported three million bushels of wheat in New Orleans elevators and forty thousand car loads on the tracks awaiting storage room. Baltimore reported four million, two hundred and sixty thousand bushels in the elevators and many cars awaiting storage.

New York reports the stock of grain in the elevators as THREE TIMES the normal amount. Yet, with all this abundance of food, millions of our people who produced it are hungry and naked in the Globe-Democrat of Saturday appeared the following:

Chicago, Ill., February 26.—Today we have the largest stocks of food on hand in the history of our country. Canned meats, fruits, potatoes and apples glut the warehouses. We have an excess of 75,000,000 bushels of wheat ready for shipment, with no foreign outlet.—J. C. Merrill, secretary of the Board of Trade.

"Warehouses throughout the country have enough food on hand to supply the nation. Big crops are in sight and no people in the world were ever more comfortably situated as to supplying their own wants."—Edward L. Hart, representative of Morris & Co.

In view of these statements and the rumor of a possible embargo on exports, the question was raised today in commercial circles as to why high prices for foodstuffs prevail. Business men express the opinion that something had interfered with the operation of the law of supply and demand.

Suppose the food-grabbers should not be able to unload? And it now appears that they are not. For two American freight ships have already sank for "nosing" around where they had no business. Suppose this enormous wheat supply is still on hand sixty days hence, with no prospect of export? Don't you know that the market would come down in a crash, and that the farmer would get, perhaps, no more for the new crop than for the last?

Then there are the Russian speculators. They have not been idle and have stored one hundred and fifty million bushels of wheat and rye for export as soon as a passage is forced into the Black sea. This passage is known as the Dardanelles—a narrow strip of deep water that passes by Constantinople. Sunday papers told that 50 of the war ships of the Allies were bombarding the Dardanelles, and that the passage would be opened. This will let the Russian wheat into England and France, where it has already been contracted for.

The cutest bank robbery happened at Havana, Ark. Bank and other robberies happen every day and are not news, but at Havana it so happened that the president was alone in the bank when the robbers entered. They looted the bank of four thousand dollars, and then forced the president to accompany them out of town. Many people saw the three walking together and suspected nothing, and it was two hours before it was discovered that the bank had been robbed. Searching parties found the bank president in the mountains eleven miles from town. But the robbers escaped.

At a mass meeting of citizens from practically every township in Oregon county gathered at the county seat. A resolution was adopted making an appeal to the Governor asking for state aid. They ask that he present the matter in a special message to the state legislature now in session at Jefferson City asking that an appropriation be made for relief of the sufferers in that county and other parts of the state in the same destitute condition.

A MUDDLED QUESTION. Last week, with a request to publish, an Oran subscriber sent in the following from the Christian Herald, under the title of "A nation takes the pledge."

"The press announces the declaration by Emperor Nicholas of Russia, in reply to the Russian Union of Abstinence, that he long ago decided to interdict for all time the sale of alcoholic drinks by the government. This ban on the business is hailed with enthusiasm by the Russian press, according to the report. As one result of the decrease which has taken place in that country in the sale of liquor it is stated that savings banks deposits increased eleven million, five hundred thousand dollars in September over that month the previous years."

I don't know whether my Oran friend intended for me to comment on the above or not. But I will say that just because it happens to be a press report, is no sign that it is true. The purpose of the item is to convince the masses that they are poor because they waste too much. Any how, it would be dangerous to look to despotic Russia as a guide in anything.

On the other hand, a few months ago the press reports contained "facts" about Turkey that I believe to have been inspired by the liquor interests. This report said that one of the tenets of the mohammedan religion was the non-use of alcohol, but that it had been discovered that the people became slaves to strong drugs more destructive than alcohol, and that agents of the Turkish government were in "Christian" Europe arranging for the introduction of breweries into Turkey.

The liquor question is hard to beat in setting people quarreling and keep them from discovering the real cause of our troubles.

ALL FOR PROFIT. Funny things happen in our so-called civilization, and a fellow has to be all sorts of a man to keep his place in the front ranks of society.

Milwaukee is the home of the Allis-Chalmers company, a branch of the steel trust. The officers of this company are among Milwaukee's foremost citizens.

The population of Milwaukee is largely German. So, also, are the heads of the Allis-Chalmers company.

Milwaukee has an extensive German-American neutrality league organized to protest against the sale of munitions of war by American manufacturers on the ground that it is a breach of neutrality. They want to stop the war.

At the head of this neutrality league are the heads of the Allis-Chalmers company, in Milwaukee. And just when this league was getting its loudest in its protests, and about to offer up prayers for peace, the Milwaukee Leader discovered that the Allis-Chalmers company was working overtime to fill an order for Shrapnel and other war munitions for the allies!

The Leader also discovered that a German tanner, also a member of this neutrality league, was running his factory night and day with three shifts, to supply France and England with leather, which is as necessary in war as other material.

It is needless to add that the German patriots in this country who are supplying the enemies of Germany in Europe with war munitions scarcely blushed at the exposure.

Business is business.

PAYING FOR THE WAR. From Pearson's Magazine. The total of war loan and war credits assumed by the nations of Europe from August 1, 1914, to January 1, 1915, was a little above Eight Billion Dollars, \$8,057,500,000, to be exact.

This is not the total cost of five months of the present insane war, but represents the amount that has been added to the debts of the warring nations and their neighbors.

It much exceeds the estimates made at the beginning of the struggle.

We have, in the United States, an easy and blithesome view of the war situation not shared by any experienced observer in Europe.

It is our idea that while this struggle may cost some lives perhaps, and interfere with some trade, it is like a May storm, and when it has passed, everything will be as before.

WHERE WAR DANGER LIES. From the Milwaukee Leader. Senator Smoot and J. Ham Lewis cry out that war threatens the United States. They want an immediate increase in the appropriations for ships, guns, etc.

There is no doubt of the immediate danger of war. These gentlemen are even now leading the bold buccanneries of steel in a desperate raid upon the national treasury.

Smoot and Lewis have never failed to answer "here" when the corporate interests of America called for a mobilization. That they instantly volunteered in this crisis was but natural.

In such a powder mine as the world is today this sort of fireworks has its dangers. Even in times of peace these continuous plundering expeditions of the steel and powder trusts upon the treasury, with their accompanying martial chin music, are a peril to everything that is best in our national life—is the blackest treason to any real and worth while patriotism.

There are bread riots in Italy. Germany in living on a meal ticket. Austria has just arranged to go on the same plan. The English house of commons is debating similar steps. French and Belgian workers are fighting their landlords with almost as much animosity as they are the Germans.

These are the big happenings in Europe. They are more pregnant with historical import than the taking of a dozen yards of trenches in Flanders, or even the sinking of as many ships on the channel.

The battle between the jingo hypnotist and hunger, which has just broken out in Italy, is raging in every other nation. In the end hunger will win the attention of the people.

An army travels on its belly as Napoleon has told us. Nations move on the same organ. An empty stomach soon cools a hot head.

The cries of hungry children do not harmonize with a life and drum corps. Patriotic songs will not pay the rent, even though they help to increase profits.

Italy may join the triple alliance or the triple entente, but she has already taken her place in the international hunger league, and when that league moves into action the real war will begin.

NO PLACE FOR ROCKEFELLER. From the Milwaukee Leader. Like a European Feudal Lord, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., has come into a great estate by right of inheritance. In Colorado he has been given control of large coal fields, which were pilfered from the public domain, and with them a power that is absolute over thousands of men and women dependent upon him for the opportunity to work and live.

Unlike the feudal lord, Rockefeller has rendered no service in return for the privileges which he enjoys. He has been a leech. He has not been a leech, he has been a parasite. He has not been a parasite, he has been a parasite.

The elder Rockefeller served a certain function. He organized the oil-industry. He did it brutally. He crushed his competitors. He showed none of the weaknesses which are so fatal to those who conquer. His work has been done. His son might humanize the exploiting nature of his hereditary rule, but even that he has failed to do. He is moved to pity for human suffering in distant lands, but the suffering which his own callousness and rapacity have caused, have awakened no regrets or aroused within him no sympathy. Only the shrinking fear that he is held by millions of his countrymen in contempt has brought from his lips the belated promise to undo in part the evil that has been done in his name.

Rockefeller has failed even in his humanitarian professions, but were he a benevolent despot and his virtues sung by thousands, there yet would be no place for him and his kind in the industrial life of the American democracy—in a land which is dedicated to the proposition that this is and should be a government of, for and by the people.

WHICH WAS WORSE? A farmer, buying some tools in a hardware store, was asked if he did not want a bicycle. "A bicycle won't eat its head off," said the salesman, "and you can ride it around your farm. They're cheap now and I can let you have one for \$35."

"I guess I'd rather put the thirty-five into a cow," said the farmer reflectively.

"Ha-ha," laughed the hardware man, "you'd look mighty foolish riding 'round your farm on a cow, now, wouldn't you?"

"Well, I dunno," said the farmer, "no more foolish than I would milking a bicycle."

If the workers did not have to support the army, navy, prisons, poor houses, asylums and other institutions born of capitalism, the expense of government would be so little that you would hardly notice it.

Read the unmuzzled Kicker.